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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1804
INFO RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RUEAHLG/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHDC
RUEAORC/US CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS CAIRO 006191

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
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STATE FOR NEA/ELA, EB/TRA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAIR](#) [BTIO](#) [BEXP](#) [BTRA](#) [CGEN](#) [EG](#)

SUBJECT: AIRLINE REPS HELD AT JFK SHIRK FUTURE US INVESTMENT

¶1. (SBU) Egyptian representatives from AMC Airlines, one of the country's largest and longest running private airlines, were taken into secondary questioning at JFK International Airport for more than 12 hours while en route to Seattle in late August. Company representatives, including the chairman's son, who is also a pilot for the Cairo-based company, claim that while in secondary questioning they were mistreated and subjected to body searches. All were eventually admitted, but missed connecting flights to Seattle, where they were arranging delivery of a new Boeing aircraft to add to their fleet.

¶2. (SBU) After the incident, a Boeing representative contacted FCS, protesting the incident. He told FCS that AMC had informed them that they would reconsider their business ties with US-based companies. FCS Counselor met with company chairman El Sayed Saber the week of September 25, apologizing for the incident and encouraging him to contact FCS before future trips to the US so he could try to assure hassle-free entry for legitimate business travelers.

¶3. (SBU) Last week, FCS coordinated with post's local Legatt office to ensure that an Egypt Air delegation en route to Seattle for another Boeing purchase did not face similar obstacles. Legatt attach contacted FBI and DHS representatives at the port of entry to alert them about the representatives' arrival, and they were admitted without incident.

¶4. (SBU) Comment. AMC's story is likely to circulate among the local business community, who increasingly see the US as an unwelcoming place to do business. Boeing is concerned about the negative impact that incidents of this nature may have on their exports to Egypt and the region. Post hopes that the arrival of a new DHS visa security unit in Cairo, expected in January, will help reduce these kinds of problems before travelers board flights to the U.S.

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